West. Theo. Sem. Mar. 6. 1847.

To the Soc. Inq.
Theo. Sem. Princeton

Dear Brethren,

Your letter was duly received, and has been read by us with pleasure & profit, while we consider your earnest desire for us, that we may be sincerely and fully devoted to the service of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation, and that we may be eminently "endued with power from on high"; and we can faithfully assure you that our desire and prayer to God on your behalf is, that you may be in health and prosper, that you may have an unction from the Holy One, and that your prayers "for our spiritual welfare and growth in grace" may not only be answered, but be returned with ten-fold blessings into your own bosoms. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"; and though we are absent from each other in the flesh, yet we trust, that we "are all one in Christ Jesus", and that we yield unfeigned obedience to his command — "Again a new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another as I have loved you". May we all "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus", and may the enriching blessing of our divine Master rest upon us in our mutual endeavours to stir up each others minds by way of remembrance".

We have, at present, very little to communicate by way of information. Two of our Professors, Dr. Elliott and Dr. McGill, are continued with us in their usual health and vigour. Dr. Green as you are aware, left for Baltimore, about the first of February. We have had 48 students here this session; and though our Institution is still struggling with some degree of adversity, yet

we have reason to think that the day of prosperity is not far distant. The tone of piety is not as high among us as we could wish; there appears to be a considerable degree of coldness & indifference with regard to eternal things. But yet we have cause for gratitude and praise that we are not left without some tokens of the presences of the Spirit in our hearts. In our prayers, however, we are constrained to exclaim, with the church around us - "Wilt thou not revive us again;" "O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of these years." You ask "whether we must not believe from prophecy and from the nature of the thing itself that more faithful, self denying and devoted men must arise, before Jerusalem shall be established a praise in all the earth." To this, Dear brethren, there can be but one reply in view of transpiring occurrences of such present interest and such prospective importance; and in view of the spirit which now moves & agitates the public mind. And it certainly behoves all those who are already in the ministry and especially those who are soon to enter upon that work, & whose privilege it may be, in divine providence, to fight the battle of the Lord against the combined powers of the opposers of vital godliness to put on the whole armour of ~~the gospel~~ God that they may be able to stand in the evil day and having done all to stand". The church of Christ must now be nearing some great crisis in her onward progress to the bright day of millenial glory. This sentiment is perhaps becoming more general, and the expectation that God is about to visit the human race - especially the church - in some notable manner is now widely diffused among christians of all denominations. When, indeed, we take a view of the world without any reference to the past and behold the wide-spread influence of Pagan, Mohammedan, Jewish, and Antichristian superstition we are ready to say that centuries must roll away before Christianity can become universal; but when we compare the present condition of the world with what it was thirty

or forty years ago — when we consider what wonders God has wrought even within the past few years, and the clear indi=cations of some great change which are springing up in different parts of the world, particularly in Europe, we are driven to the conclusion that the decisive conflict between truth and error is at hand, and that it is now high time for ministers and can=didates for the ministry to awake out of sleep, to gird on the whole armour of the gospel, and to prepare to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; for doubtless the ministers of the gospel must be men of pre-eminent piety, devotedness, learning and industry in order to meet the demands that will be made upon them. "They must be men" who will not count their lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." And now, Dear Brethren, while we have cause to bless God that he has caused us to live in such an age as this — that he permits us to look forward to such a work as now lies before us; does it not become us to prostrate ourselves in the very dust before him; to acknowledge our utter unworthiness in his sight; ~~and~~ to deplore our sinful indifference about the interests of his kingdom; and to plead night & day in importunate prayer that he would "quicken us according to his word", and inspire our souls with that high and holy zeal which may urge us on with invincible energy in advancing the moral regeneration of the world: We who are preparing for the ministry as well as those already in the field of labor, ought to be able to say with the Apostle, "the love of Christ con=straineth us": and though, in view of the arduous labors and the solemn and awful responsibility of the office, we are forced to ex=claim, "who is sufficient for these things?" yet let us consider that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down strong holds, that God

hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound things that are mighty, and that if we are faithful unto death we shall receive a crown of life.

"The spirit of missions is rather low among us at present, though not so low perhaps as at some former times. In general there is a good state of feeling in regard to the calls for help which come up from the moral wastes of our own land, and from the perishing heathen. "There seems to be a prayerful solicitude on the part of the Brethren, to know their duty; but yet few devote themselves to the work of Foreign Missions. Two or three in the Seminary desire to be sent as foreign missionaries, and a few others have the matter under serious consideration; but whether any of the present Senior class will yet determine to go we cannot say. Most of the class expect to go West & South West. O for more of the mind which was in Christ Jesus & which glowed in the bosoms of those devoted missionaries "who, though dead yet speak". We rejoice to hear that so many of your number have resolved to become ambassadors for Christ to those who are sitting in the region and shadow of death. "The Lord grant to raise up more faithful missionaries in both these Seminaries and in other places, who, in the progress of their work, may say with the Apostle, "Yea so have we strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest we should build upon another man's foundation"

And now, Dear Brethren, in conclusion, requesting an interest in your prayers to God for us that we may be made wise to win souls, and meet for an inheritance with the saints in light, we "commend you to God & to the word of his grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified"

By order of Society of Inquiry.

A. McElwain, Cor. Sec.